

# Sustaining English Language Education with Social Networking Sites (SNSs): A Systematic Review

Siok Yong Tan <sup>\*,†</sup> and Melor Md Yunus <sup>\*,†</sup> 

Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi 43600, Selangor, Malaysia

\* Correspondence: p111802@siswa.ukm.edu.my (S.Y.T.); melor@ukm.edu.my (M.M.Y.)

† These authors contributed equally to this work.

**Abstract:** Mastery of the English language has always been major impediment to many educators and learners around the world. In this rapidly globalising world, social networking sites (SNSs) have risen to the top, especially during the unprecedented advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the review of SNSs regarding the English education field is scant, in spite of its significance for sustainability education. On that account, this systematic literature review highlights the potential benefits of using SNSs for educational practices. Using the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) statement, 23 articles from 2018 to 2022 were accessed from three databases, particularly Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), and Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC). First, the reviewed articles manifest that Facebook is the most frequently used SNSs for English educational purposes. Second, the findings indicated that SNSs have shown a positive impact in enhancing English language competency and improving learning attributes. Third, this review addressed the challenges of using SNSs in the English education field. These findings inferred that there are still research gaps related to the use of SNSs in sustaining English language education. Substantially, this review is advantageous for prospective researchers in identifying the research gaps regarding the use of SNSs for English teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** English language; social networking sites (SNSs); sustainability education; language competency; learning attributes; challenges



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## 1. Introduction

As the world heads into digitalisation, social networking sites (SNSs) have gradually emerged in almost all fields of work and study, including education, business, science, technology, etc. [1]. The developing trend of SNSs is increasingly evident during the unprecedented advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has sped up the digital transformation where the educators and learners are urged to utilise SNSs for educational purposes in sustaining quality education despite the challenges faced. As stated by Cavus et al. [2], the use of SNSs encourages sustainable learning due to their compatibility with the pupils' preferences and learning cultures. Likewise, SNSs serve as a valuable tool in sustaining formal and informal English language learning [3]. This is in line with the fourth Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whereby ongoing learning opportunities and quality education for all are given emphasis [4].

Despite the growing trends in the use of SNSs, the review of SNSs in the English education field is scant. This limitation impedes the users in realising whether SNSs are effective in improving their English language competency and learning attributes. Thus, this systematic review was effectuated to explore the potential benefits and challenges of using SNSs in the English education field. It is anticipated that the review will be valuable for education stakeholders to embrace SNSs for educational practices in their daily lives.

In the following subsections, the researchers will discuss English language education and SNSs in education judiciously. Subsequently, three research questions will be

formulated to serve as a guide in reviewing the articles. It will then be followed by the updated guidelines for reporting systematic reviews issued by the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) 2020 statement. After reviewing the articles, the findings of the studies will be deliberated to answer the three research questions.

### *1.1. English Language Education*

In recent years, the role of English as an international language among the speakers of various languages has gained much attention [5–8]. According to Ilyosovna [9], approximately 350 million native speakers speak English as their first language whereas 430 million people speak English as their second language around the world. This is seconded by Rao [5] as he affirmed that English plays a paramount role among the people from all walks of life. Consequently, learners are encouraged to master English in order to be competitive in this globalised world.

It is undeniable that Malaysia is one of the countries where English is taught as a second language due to the recognition of English as an international language [10]. The implementation of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013–2025 has encouraged several education reforms over the years. With the revolution of technology in education, conventional chalk-and-talk teaching method is no longer adequate to grab the pupils' interest and curiosity in learning. Therefore, the educators have no option but to shift their traditional teaching approaches to modern teaching methods in order to meet the learning needs of their pupils. Since most of the pupils these days share a natural affinity for technology, change is inevitable to optimise the effectiveness of teaching and learning [11]. This is in accordance with the second and seventh shift of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013–2025, in which both shifts emphasise the English language and technology, respectively, to prepare the pupils in a rapidly changing world nowadays [12,13].

In 21st century teaching and learning, the integration of technologies in order to create a fun and interactive learning milieu is indispensable [14]. This is further supported in the pedagogical principles outlined in the curriculum which emphasise fun, meaningful, and purposeful learning as well as the integration of salient new technologies [15]. For instance, social networking sites (SNSs) such as YouTube, Telegram, WhatsApp, Line, Twitter, Instagram, etc. are highly welcomed among the learners for both academic and entertaining purposes. Although they appear to be more prevalent in tertiary education, SNSs are assuredly favourable for every education level, whereby primary and secondary education are no exception.

### *1.2. Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in Education*

Drawing near to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0 or 4IR), the emergence of digitalisation is even more profound. With the omnipresent nature of social networking sites (SNSs), it has captured the attention of various education stakeholders [16]. Additionally, the sudden disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic accelerates the education digital transformation worldwide. However, the issue of SNSs as a formal or informal education platform has always been a disputable subject amongst the practitioners [2,3]. A question that English teachers would ponder is whether SNSs could bring positive impact towards the learners' educational performance.

Social networking sites (SNSs) or being known as social media is defined in various ways by different researchers. Robbins and Singer [17] posited SNSs as online platforms that empower the sharing of knowledge over the Internet. Moreover, Chisenga, Kedemi, and Sam [18] averred that SNSs can be in the form of blogging, micro-blogging, and audio sharing applications as well as academic networking sites. It is further manifested by several researchers where they opined SNSs as a tool that associate individuals worldwide through visuals, audios, and chats [19]. Meanwhile, SNSs are also deemed germane for both synchronous and asynchronous instruction which aids in facilitating the pupils' learning progress [20].

With the interpenetration of burgeoning SNSs into pupils' everyday life, many researchers have explored the effectiveness of SNSs as well as examined its negative effects [19,21–30]. Nevertheless, many studies in relation to SNSs are written in a generic way, emphasising certain achievement of language skills or focusing on different fields of work such as business, medical, engineering, marketing, science, and technology. Therefore, this systematic literature review was carried out to fill the gap and explore the potential benefits and challenges of using SNSs in the English education field for sustainable education.

## 2. Aim of Current Systematic Review

This systematic literature review was conducted to examine the potential benefits and challenges of using social networking sites (SNSs) in sustaining English language education. Three research questions were formulated as follow:

RQ1: What are the most frequently used social networking sites (SNSs) in the English education field?

RQ2: What are the potential benefits of using social networking sites (SNSs) in the English education field?

RQ3: What are the challenges of using social networking sites (SNSs) in the English education field?

## 3. Methods

This systematic literature review complies with the method of preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA), which comprises three phases, namely identification, screening, and included. PRISMA serves as a reporting guideline to help the researchers in selecting, analysing, and synthesising the studies reviewed [31]. To establish a systematic review that is beneficial to other users, a transparent process of how the articles were identified and included is illustrated, as shown in Figure 1.

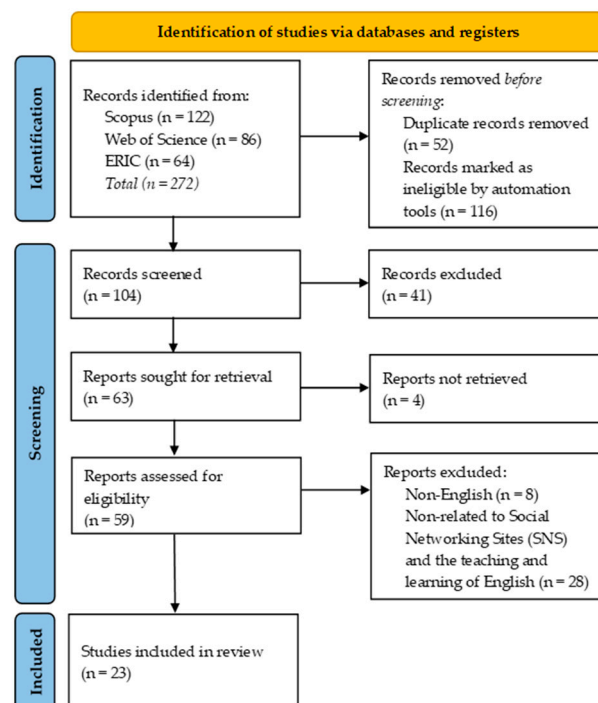


Figure 1. PRISMA adapted from [30].

### 3.1. Phase 1: Identification

As delineated in the PRISMA guidelines, the first phase in the systematic review is identification. On that account, the researchers have selected three databases, namely Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), and Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC).

Scopus provides an amalgamation of encyclopaedic abstract and citation database with linked scholarly content [32]. Meanwhile, WoS serves as a database with vast scientific citation search as well as analytical information [33]. On the other hand, ERIC is a more education-based platform that supports a broad array of education research from over 1000 comprehensive indexed journals throughout the world.

In this systematic review, keywords were constructed discreetly in order to identify the relevant studies related to the use of social networking sites (SNSs) in the teaching and learning of English for sustainable education. Table 1 below encapsulates the search string used in this study for each database.

**Table 1.** Search string used in this study.

Database	Search String
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("Social Networking Site *" OR "SNS" OR "social network *" OR "social media *" OR "Facebook" OR "YouTube" OR "Twitter" OR "Telegram" OR "WhatsApp" OR "TikTok" OR "Instagram")) AND ("English teaching *" OR "English learning *" OR "teaching and learning of English"))
Web of Science (WoS)	TS = (("Social Networking Site *" OR "SNS" OR "social network *" OR "social media *" OR "Facebook" OR "YouTube" OR "Twitter" OR "Telegram" OR "WhatsApp" OR "TikTok" OR "Instagram")) AND ("English teaching *" OR "English learning *" OR "teaching and learning of English"))
Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC)	SNS AND English

\*: Search String.

### 3.2. Phase 2: Screening

Amidst searching for the related studies in the three databases, the screening process took place where duplicate articles were scrutinised and obliterated correspondingly. As a result, 52 duplicate articles were eliminated and the remaining articles were screened by inclusion and exclusion criteria as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Type of article	Journal articles	Review articles, books, book chapters, conference proceedings
Publication Year	2018–2022 (5 years timespan)	<2018
Language	English	Non-English
Content	Related to social networking sites (SNSs) and the teaching and learning of English	Non-related to social networking sites (SNSs) and the teaching and learning of English

Subsequently, the remaining 104 articles were screened by their titles, abstracts, and keywords to ensure that the studies were related to SNSs in the teaching and learning of English. From this screening process, 41 malapropos articles were removed, resulting in 63 articles eligible for further screening. Eventually, the full text articles were accessed for eligibility so that highly reliable data could be obtained from this study. A total of 36 articles were then removed for the following reasons: full text not written in English language ( $n = 8$ ) and studies were found unrelated to SNSs and the teaching and learning of English ( $n = 28$ ).

### 3.3. Phase 3: Included

As a consequence, 23 articles were included in this systematic literature review after going through the screening process. The aims of the selected studies were all related to

the use of SNSs in the English education field. In the following sections, the findings of the studies will be itemised and discussed deliberately.

#### 4. Results

In this section, the researchers will exhibit the findings of the selected studies in three categories pertaining to the three research questions formulated.

##### 4.1. RQ1: What Are the Most Frequently Used Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in the English Education Field?

From the articles included, the SNSs platforms mentioned were categorised into seven types, namely (1) Facebook, (2) YouTube, (3) Twitter, (4) Telegram, (5) WhatsApp, (6) Edmodo, and (7) Generic. The results were tabulated, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Types of SNS platforms used in the English education field.

References	Social Networking Sites (SNSs)						
	Facebook	YouTube	Twitter	Telegram	WhatsApp	Edmodo	Generic
[34]	✓						
[35]		✓					
[36]			✓				
[37]							✓
[38]							✓
[39]	✓						
[40]							✓
[41]	✓						
[42]					✓		
[43]				✓	✓		
[44]		✓					
[45]				✓			
[46]						✓	
[47]	✓						
[48]		✓					
[49]	✓	✓	✓				
[50]					✓		
[51]							✓
[52]							✓
[53]							✓
[54]		✓					
[55]							✓
[56]	✓						

Meanwhile, Table 4 below shows the summary of the number of research articles that addressing different SNS platforms used in the English education field.

##### 4.2. RQ2: What Are the Potential Benefits of Using Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in the English Education Field?

In this section, the researchers will itemise the potential benefits of using SNSs in the English education field into two subsections, namely (1) enhancing English language competency and (2) improving English learning attributes.

###### 4.2.1. Enhancing English Language Competency

In this section, the skills practised by the various SNS platforms are depicted in Table 5 below. They were designated into five specific skills, known as (1) Speaking/Communication, (2) Reading, (3) Writing, (4) Grammar, and (5) Vocabulary as well as all skills in general, which

is labelled as Generic. Although listening is considered one of the language skills, it is not shown in the following results as none of the studies solely addressed the integration of SNSs in teaching listening skills.

**Table 4.** Number of research articles discussing different SNS platforms.

Social Networking Sites (SNSs)	Number of Research Articles
Facebook	6
YouTube	5
Twitter	2
Telegram	2
WhatsApp	3
Edmodo	1
Generic	7

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##### 4.3.1. Enhancing English Language Competency

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**Table 5.** English language skills focused on the use of SNSs in the English education field.

References	English Language Skills					
	Speaking/ Communication	Reading	Writing	Grammar	Vocabulary	Generic
[34]			✓			
[35]						✓
[36]						✓
[37]	✓					
[38]						✓
[39]						✓
[40]						✓
[41]			✓			
[42]	✓					
[43]						✓
[44]						✓
[45]				✓		
[46]						✓
[47]					✓	
[48]	✓					
[49]						✓

Table 5. Cont.

References	English Language Skills					
	Speaking/ Communication	Reading	Writing	Grammar	Vocabulary	Generic
[50]						✓
[51]				✓		
[52]		✓				
[53]						✓
[54]			✓			
[55]						✓
[56]						✓

Subsequently, Table 6 below shows the summary of the number of research articles that discussing different English language skills focused in the studies while utilising SNSs in the English education field.

Table 6. Number of research articles discussing different English language skills.

English Language Skills	Number of Research Articles
Speaking/Communication	3
Reading	1
Writing	3
Grammar	2
Vocabulary	1
Generic	13

#### 4.3.2. Improving English Learning Attributes

In this section, the researchers illustrate the English learning attributes focused on the use of SNSs in the English education field. They were being classified into five learning attributes, namely (1) Motivation, (2) Confidence, (3) Engagement, (4) Collaboration, and (5) Value. The results were enumerated, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. English learning attributes focused on the use of SNSs in the English education field.

References	English Learning Attributes					
	Motivation	Confidence	Engagement	Collaboration	Value	Not Mentioned
[34]		✓			✓	
[35]	✓				✓	
[36]	✓		✓			
[37]	✓	✓	✓			
[38]					✓	
[39]					✓	
[40]	✓		✓	✓		
[41]		✓				
[42]			✓	✓		
[43]	✓		✓	✓	✓	
[44]			✓			
[45]	✓					



Table 7. Cont.

References	English Learning Attributes					Not Mentioned
	Motivation	Confidence	Engagement	Collaboration	Value	
[46]	✓		✓	✓		
[47]				✓		
[48]	✓			✓	✓	
[49]				✓		
[50]	✓		✓	✓		
[51]	✓			✓		
[52]	✓					
[53]						✓
[54]						✓
[55]			✓			
[56]			✓			

Additionally, Table 8 below depicts the summary of the number of research articles that discussing different English learning attributes focused in the studies while utilising SNSs in the English education field.

Table 8. Number of research articles discussing different English learning attributes.

English Learning Attributes	Number of Research Articles
Motivation	11
Confidence	3
Engagement	10
Collaboration	9
Value	6
Not mentioned	2

#### 4.4. RQ3: What Are the Challenges of Using Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in the English Education Field?

In this section, the challenges of using SNSs in the English education field are delineated in Table 9 below. They were being classified into six challenges, namely (1) Nonverbal communicative competence, (2) Confidence level, (3) Insufficient support, (4) Distraction, (5) Time constraint, and (6) Technical issues.

Table 9. Challenges of using SNSs in the English education field.

Challenges	References
Nonverbal communicative competence	[37]
Confidence level	[37]
Insufficient support	[38,39]
Distraction	[38,50–52]
Time constraint	[40,46]
Technical issues	[40,50–52]
Not mentioned	[34–36,41–45,47–49,53–56]

## 5. Discussion

In this section, the researchers will discuss the findings of the selected studies thoroughly in three categories pertaining to the three research questions formulated.



### 5.1. RQ1: What Are the Most Frequently Used Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in the English Education Field?

In this systematic review, the researchers perused 23 articles related to the use of SNSs in the English education field. From the findings of the studies which were tabulated in Table 3, it can be seen that a variety of SNSs platforms were utilised. The findings indicated that the most frequently used SNSs in the English education field was Facebook, with a total of 6 out of 23 studies [34,39,41,47,49,56]. The researchers advocated the use of Facebook for sustainable English learning due to its ease for interaction which in turn fosters the knowledge sharing among the pupils [34]. This is in line with the findings conducted by [56] where they claimed that the pupils comment and post on Facebook as they exchanged their views and opinions daily. However, it is noteworthy to address a surprising issue in which females were found to surmount males in utilising Facebook for English language learning [49].

In addition, YouTube appeared to be the second highest SNSs platform used for English teaching and learning [35,44,48,49,54]. YouTube acts as a social media where the learners can press 'like', 'share', and 'subscribe' buttons which accelerates the pupils' engagement in the process of learning [35,44]. According to Alobaid [54], YouTube furnished gigantic online English learning resources to promote the learners' engagement in order to improve their writing fluency. Meanwhile, Wang and Chen [35] opined that English learning through YouTube promoted fun and interactive learning as compared to formal instruction in the classroom. In spite of that, this informal learning style was considered to be less efficacious for learners who opted for improvement in their English proficiency level [35].

Apart from that, there were three studies carried out using WhatsApp in the teaching and learning of English [42,43,50]. WhatsApp refers to a social platform that allows communication and collaboration to take place simultaneously [42]. This is further explained in a study conducted by [50] where they posited WhatsApp as an adjuvant in amplifying the individuals' collaboration, which in turn invigorates the pupils' motivation to communicate effectively with their peers. It is in line with the study conducted by [43] in which they highlighted the benefit of WhatsApp in increasing the pupils' social interaction with peers and supervisors, and ergo elevates their motivation in learning English.

Moreover, it was depicted that the following SNS platforms used by the researchers in the selected articles were Twitter [36,49] and Telegram [43,45], both with two reviewed studies, respectively. Peñalver and Urbieto [36] proposed that the use of Twitter in daily lives aid in developing the learners' critical thinking and boosting up their motivation. This is in accordance with the findings shown in the study conducted by [43] where they highlighted the effectiveness of Telegram in increasing the pupils' learning motivation.

Furthermore, there was a study that identified Edmodo [46] as the SNS platform in the English education field. Okumura [46] looked at how Edmodo was used in implementing a telecollaboration project among the Japanese students. The findings of the study indicated that the learners' intercultural understanding was triggered and their motivation was elevated concurrently with the aid of Edmodo.

Besides, it is noticeable that seven studies in the selected articles mentioned the use of SNSs for English teaching and learning in a general way, without specified any SNS platform [37,38,40,51–53,55]. From the studies, it was found that most of them highlighted the potential benefits of using SNSs in the English education field in different aspects which will be discussed meticulously in the following section.

### 5.2. RQ2: What Are the Potential Benefits of Using Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in the English Education Field?

In this section, the researchers will discuss the potential benefits of using SNSs in the English education field in two facets, namely (1) enhancing English language competency and (2) improving English learning attributes.

### 5.2.1. Enhancing English Language Competency

In this section, the skills practised by the various SNS platforms were designated into six specific skills, known as (1) Speaking/Communication, (2) Reading, (3) Writing, (4) Grammar, and (5) Vocabulary as well as all skills in general, which is labelled as Generic, as shown in Table 5. Listening skill will not be discussed particularly as it is not displayed in any of the reviewed articles.

As depicted in Table 5, a total of 13 out of 23 studies discussed SNSs as a versatile tool in enhancing all language skills, which is also known as language competency. Irrefutably, pupils are trained since primary education to master the four necessities skills in English language, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing in order to be globally competitive in this rapidly changing world [12,15]. With the ubiquitous nature of SNSs these days, it was recognised as an enjoyable and motivating tool to promote English language learning under a less intimidating environment.

Meanwhile, there were three reviewed articles focusing on speaking and writing skills, respectively. A study conducted by [42] emphasised on the integration of WhatsApp-based speaking instructional material (WABSIM) in aiding the pupils to speak English. They also pointed out the six speaking components that were prioritised, namely fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and task [42]. On the other hand, another study constructed by [34] highlighted the usage of Facebook in improving the learners' writing skills in terms of relevance, accuracy, clarity, and meaningfulness. This is in line with the research carried out by [41] where they viewed Facebook as an effective medium in learning writing in English for specific purposes (ESP) context outside the classroom.

Additionally, two studies focusing on grammar were identified. In the study that Ghorbani and Ebadi [45] conducted with their learners, Telegram was utilised to improve the learners' grammatical development. The findings of the study proved that Telegram brings positive impacts in developing the learners' grammatical structures and accuracy in online chats [45]. Besides, another study conducted by [51] accentuated SNSs to be deemed effective on the learning of phrasal verbs due to its fascinating features such as providing support, feedback, and interaction which contributed to the sustainable educational use of SNSs in the teaching and learning of English.

Furthermore, it is remarkable to note that there was only one study addressing reading and vocabulary individually. Based on the study conducted by [52], the pupils with positive attitudes towards SNSs generally develop well in their reading comprehension ability. On top of that, the implementation of closed Facebook communities was evidently advantageous in developing the pupils' vocabulary level in English where synchronous and asynchronous collaboration with the teachers and peers were promoted [47].

All in all, the researchers noticed that the use of SNSs in enhancing the pupils' English language competency was not given much emphasis as compared to the improvement in their English learning attributes, which will be further discussed in the following section. This is supported by the study conducted by [48] where they posited that the pupils' English language skills were surprisingly found not significantly increased in comparison with their self-quality improvements.

### 5.2.2. Improving English Learning Attributes

In this section, the researchers will discuss the gradually improved learning attributes with the use of SNSs in the English education field in five aspects, namely (1) Motivation, (2) Confidence, (3) Engagement, (4) Collaboration, and (5) Value.

Firstly, in the research related to the use of SNSs in the English education field, 11 out of 23 articles included in this systematic review discussed the effectiveness of SNSs in motivating the learners to learn the language. Many researchers opined that motivation plays a crucial role in language learning, and ergo SNSs were utilised in order to curtail the learners' stress under an entertaining milieu [35–37,43,51,52]. As asserted by Wang and Chen [35], the pupil-centred nature of YouTube enabled the learners to choose and watch

their favourable videos, which would in turn arouse their motivation in learning English and sustaining their learning goals.

Aside from that, engagement is the second most captured learning attributes identified from the selected studies, with a total of 10 out of 23 articles. Based on the study conducted by [36], the integration of SNSs in the teaching and learning process helps to engage the pupils in meaningful communicative practice and create a real-world connection. This is supported by [56] where they believed that SNSs are utilised to strengthen the learners' engagement in classroom activities, which in turn incite their language development.

Moreover, there were nine reviewed articles that discussed collaboration as the learning attribute that serves as one of the purposes SNSs were used in order to improve the mastery of English language. With the utilisation of SNSs, it is believed that a collaborative virtual setting can be created to ease the learning process [40,43]. As reiterated by [50], SNSs encourage collaboration through peer feedback that aids in elevating the pupils' communicative language proficiency. For instance, the learners collaborate in groups using SNSs as their discussion platform to solve the problems.

On top of that, the utilisation of SNSs was found to be functional in stimulating the pupils' confidence in learning English. Under the employment of SNS, the pupils were no longer passive learners, but become active recipients where they were more confident to initiate discussion [34]. This is in accordance with the research conducted by [41] where they asserted that Facebook groups can boost the pupils' self-confidence to interact and respond concomitantly in English, which may be uncustomary in traditional classrooms.

In addition, it is undeniable that the value of SNSs for sustainable English education cannot be neglected. Many findings of the studies revealed that the learners appreciated the value of the English learning approach as compared to the conventional teaching method, where self-directed learning through SNSs is greatly promoted [34,35,38,39,43]. Additionally, SNSs are very helpful in promoting critical thinking skills, which aids in preparing critical thinkers that meet the demands of the 21st century learning [43].

### *5.3. RQ3: What Are the Challenges of Using Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in the English Education Field?*

In this systematic review, the researchers highlighted the challenges of using SNSs in the English education field in six aspects, namely (1) Nonverbal communicative competence, (2) Confidence level, (3) Insufficient support, (4) Distraction, (5) Time constraint and, (6) Technical issues.

As depicted in Table 9, a total of 4 out of 23 studies emphasised distraction as the main hindrance while utilising SNSs in the teaching and learning process. A study conducted by Giang and Tuan [38] substantiated that the learners spend most of the time using SNSs for entertaining purposes such as playing games, listening songs, and watching movies instead of educational purposes. Besides, it is possible that private messages in the SNS kept the pupils from paying attention to the learning content [51]. In a similar vein, Raja et al. [52] asserted that the use of SNSs is often hampered by the distractions from SNS notifications, irrelevant chats or comments, and online advertisements.

Moreover, a similar number of studies, which is a total of 4 out of 23 studies, accentuated technical issues faced by both teachers and learners slowed them to make good use of SNSs for educational purposes. As posited by Imamyartha et al. [50] and Raja et al. [52], technical problem such as poor internet connection quality is the major obstacle in utilising SNSs in the English education field, especially for the pupils who live in remote areas or orphanages. This is further supported by Roohani and Vinchah [51], whereby they opined that the pupils may have experienced slow internet speed or internet disconnection due to the use of virtual private network (VPN), which brings deleterious consequences on the pupils' performance.

In addition, insufficient teachers' support while using SNSs in the learning process as claimed by the researchers [38,39] is an exigent situation that requires instantaneous actions from the teachers. According to Giang and Tuan [38], the learners felt demotivated

to ameliorate their English proficiency due to the inadequate encouragement provided by their teachers in utilising SNSs for their self-study. Meanwhile, a paucity of further information while learning also hinders the pupils' learning progress as they are not able to grasp the answers given by simply checking the responses via SNSs [39].

Apart from that, time constraint is another cause for concern among the teachers and learners. Irrefutably, being technology savvy is a time-consuming process for every individual [40]. Furthermore, it is challenging for the teachers to fully utilise SNSs in the teaching and learning instructions as they are busy with administrative and teaching responsibilities concomitantly in school [46].

Last but not least, a study conducted by [37] affirmed that the use of SNSs is deemed efficacious in improving written and verbal communication, but less effective for honing nonverbal communication skills due to the absence of body language while utilising SNS. Additionally, the findings of the study revealed that SNSs are futile in boosting the learners' confidence level for in-person cross-cultural interactions [37].

## 6. Limitations and Recommendations

Nonetheless, this study was not without limitations. Firstly, this review only covered 23 articles from three databases, namely Scopus, WoS, and ERIC with few selected search string. Hence, additional databases such as Google Scholar can be included for future research to expand the field of research. Secondly, the review recapitulates the studies that explore the potential benefits of using social networking sites (SNSs) in sustaining English language education. It is proposed that prospective researchers investigate the perspectives of different education stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and students in utilising SNSs in order to gain some new insight. Thirdly, the possible drawbacks of using SNSs in the English education field are discussed in this systematic review. By addressing the challenges brought up in the articles, it allows prospective researchers to be aware of the impediment and thus enabling them to be resolved promptly in future research. Notwithstanding, this systematic review embarks upon a new avenue for future researchers in investigating the use of SNSs for English teaching and learning in sustaining education.

## 7. Conclusions

In a nutshell, this systematic review has analysed the articles pertinent to the use of social networking sites (SNSs) in the English education field. Three databases, particularly Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), and Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) were used in this study and 23 articles were found to be eligible after going through the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Subsequently, three research questions were formulated to answer the aim of this review. First, the findings of the results manifested that Facebook is the most frequently used SNSs for English educational purposes, followed by YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter, Telegram, and Edmodo. With regards to this discovery, the teachers can utilise various types of SNSs platforms during their teaching and learning instructions as it is undoubtedly no one-size-fits-all approach in education. Second, the findings indicated that SNSs have shown a positive impact in enhancing English language competency and improving learning attributes such as motivation, confidence, engagement, collaboration, and value. In relation to this matter, the educators can use specific SNS platforms to develop the pupils' English language skills and boost their learning attributes. Third, this review uncovered six challenges of using SNSs in the English education field, namely nonverbal communicative competence, confidence level, insufficient support, distraction, time constraint, and technical issues. As a result, it creates awareness among various educational stakeholders such as the government, school administrators, and teachers to collaborate in solving the challenges raised and thus creating the best learning environment for the pupils. Given that change is inevitable in this current education system, especially during the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, intelligence lies in the ability to adapt and embrace the changes. Obviously, traditional chalk-and-talk teaching style is no longer

sufficient to pique the pupils' interest and learning curiosity in light of the revolution in educational technology. In short, traditional and contemporary teaching approaches can coexist and even complement one another. Therefore, the educators who play the indispensable roles as digital literacy trailblazers could embrace the changes by integrating salient new technologies like SNSs in sustaining quality English education. For instance, mutual collaboration can be forged through a professional learning community (PLC), where the novice teachers and the experienced teachers can work hand-in-hand and share ways to support pupil-centred learning in a technology-rich environment as a means to render more opportunities in achieving the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).

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